

Introduction:

This is a collaborative unit on banned books. This project is necessary because working with teachers on lessons and units creates a more unified school community. A strong library-teacher connection will enhance student understanding and reading comprehension, as well as give students the feeling that all aspects of the school are working together to help them learn and grow. In this plan, teachers and media specialists can work together to adapt and modify this plan for differing classes. For instance, media specialists can work with social studies, English, psychology, and sociology teachers on this plan and work it to fit their schedules and school standards. I have included a plethora of activities that any of those teachers could use, perhaps collaboratively at the same time, to encourage engagement on the part of the students.

With this project, I hope to work with classroom teachers in the high school to teach aspects of propaganda, banned books, the first Amendment, and issues of censorship.

The way this works: The media specialist is the director of this unit plan. At the appropriate time (during week 1 or 2), students are given a list of books that have been banned. The media specialist goes over each book (which s/he has read) and tells students why each book has been banned. Students write the reasons the books have been banned on the sheet. They also ask questions about the books to figure out which ones they want to read. The media specialist also gives suggestions to students about what they want to read and why. Students must get their selections approved (with a signature) by parents before they are able to read them. After they finish a book, they come to me and I approve their next book (then they get another signature). All reading is done at home, as time in class is dedicated to the unit plan that follows this page). As students are reading, they are assigned journals with specific plans (they are in the following pages), which they will then discuss with the class. As students discuss these in their classes (probably English), they will give other students more ideas for what they want to read next. This is a great time for students to really get into reading. The media specialist can work with English teachers on this in terms of the unit plan that follows, and can work with other subject teachers to teach aspects of censorship, the 1st Amendment and book banning. The final project is due one week after the last book is finished. Teachers can add books, extend the project or shorten it to their needs.

Standards:

This lesson applies to the following Illinois Learning Standards:

STATE GOAL 1: Read with understanding and fluency.

STATE GOAL 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras and ideas.

STATE GOAL 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.

STATE GOAL 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.

STATE GOAL 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess and communicate information.

Big 6 Skills:

1. Task Definition: Students will:

- Explore bias and media stereotyping
- Identify and analyze propaganda techniques and how they are used in magazine and television advertisements to persuade an audience
- Read and examine a specific banned or challenged book
- Identify and discuss the issues surrounding the banning or challenging of texts
- Explore the issue of free speech and how it applies in the classroom
- Demonstrate their understanding of propaganda techniques by creating an ad campaign to support their position on the censorship of a specific text

Students will need:

- PowerPoint notes
- Handouts (attached)
- Access to books
- Parental Consent
- English teacher-media specialist collaboration

2. Information Seeking Strategies: Students will:

- Consider all information from the PowerPoint and the teacher/media specialist before deciding which books to read
- Understand censorship and its implications through lectures from the media specialist, online readings, class discussions, group work, and homework assignments

3. Location and Access: Students will:

- Use online sources to find appropriate articles on censorship, propaganda, and banned books
- Find the books they choose to read through the RCAT database
- Access the books through our library or interlibrary loan, if unavailable
- Listen to the media specialist for information on the available books and the content within them

4. Use of Information: Students will:

- Listen to and take notes on the lectures, PowerPoint presentations, and class discussions
- Examine advertisements and understand their implications through teacher lecture, class discussions, handouts and articles
- Understand censorship through PowerPoint presentations, class discussions, and handouts
- Read the banned books and determine how they feel about controversial issues
- Explore the idea of free speech through class discussions and assignments
- Access websites to find information about why certain books are challenged or banned
- Use reading strategies to preview, predict, summarize, connect, question, image, and infer while they read their texts
- Bring in magazine ads for class discussion in relation to propaganda and effective advertising
- Utilize class notes to make assessments of ads
- Read “Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television”
- Explore the types of propaganda techniques used in the magazine ads selected
- Explore the similarities and differences between television and magazine ads

5. Synthesis: Students will:

- Watch a few television commercials and complete the handout for homework
- Discuss the findings from their homework and class work

- Explain why they might choose one medium over the other (television vs. magazine) to advertise and give the reasons for their choice
- Use their response journals to explore the ways in which the novel focuses on controversial issues
- Create an ad campaign to support their decision to ban or not to ban the book that they read. Students should use their understanding of propaganda techniques when creating their campaign
- Predict in their journal why the book that they selected may have been challenged or banned
- Write letters to the school committee addressing the banning of books in the school system
- Have students explore stereotypes and bias in health-related advertisement and services and the use of propaganda and media bias in anti-drug and anti-smoking campaigns
- Research landmark cases that influenced the issue of free speech
- Hold a mock court case to debate whether a controversial book should be banned or not in an elementary classroom
- Debate the censorship of movies or television programs
- Create a top ten list of the most important books of their time and why the issues addressed in them are crucial to study

6. Evaluation:

- Make observations and anecdotal notes based on class discussion
- 5 Journals on books students are reading (assign them as you are reading, usually one per week, as homework)
- Final project (Children's Book and Poster)
- Quiz on censorship
- Evaluate student's written responses on the Analyzing Advertisements handout
- Evaluate the entries in each student's response journal relating to the book that they read during the lesson:
 - Low performance: The student states one or two of the central issues raised in the novel very briefly, but does not provide reflection
 - At or below average: The student states one or two of the central issues raised in the novel briefly and reflects briefly on each
 - At or above average: The student explores the central issues raised in the novel thoughtfully and critically
 - Exemplary performance: The student explores numerous issues raised in the novel thoughtfully and critically
- Use the Rubric to assess each student's ad campaign
- Use rubric to assess final projects
- Students will grade themselves according to what they think they should earn on all projects, using the same rubric that I use for their projects
- Ask what would I do differently? What did I like best? What would you tell kids who were going to do this project next year? What did you do best on this project? How would you organize this project differently? How does this compare to other assignments in this class?
- Ask if they see censorship, stereotyping, bias, etc. differently now after this unit is complete
- Ask if they see the media differently now (tv, music, commercials)
- Ask if students would be able to defend a book they think should be allowed to be in a school but is being challenged

Banned Books Unit (Detailed)

Overview

It is important for young people to understand their individual rights and what they, as citizens, can do to protect these rights. In addition, young people need to understand the way in which bias and stereotyping are used by the media to influence popular opinion. In this lesson, students examine propaganda and media bias and explore a variety of banned and challenged books, researching the reasons these books have been censored. Following this research, students choose a side of the censorship issue and support their position through the development of an advertising campaign.

From Theory to Practice

Maxwell, M. & Berman, M. (1997). To ban or not to ban: Confronting the issue of censorship in the English class. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 41, 92-96.

- * Controversial texts are ideal pedagogical tools to foster debate and to guide the development of logical thinking skills and cooperative learning.
- * Texts that teach students about ethnic, racial, and sexual diversity encourage understanding of human differences.
- * By exploring controversial texts, students acquire the tools of rational thought by which they can approach, analyze, and debate controversial issues in a forum of mutual respect and understanding.

Student Objectives

Students will

- * Explore bias and media stereotyping
- * Identify and analyze propaganda techniques and how they are used in magazine and television advertisements to persuade an audience
- * Read and examine a specific banned or challenged book
- * Identify and discuss the issues surrounding the banning or challenging of texts
- * Explore the issue of free speech and how it applies in the classroom
- * Demonstrate their understanding of propaganda techniques by creating an ad campaign to support their position on the censorship of a specific text

Instructional Plan

Preparation

1. For this type of lesson, it is important not only to preview all of the Internet information, but also to make parents and administration aware of the outcomes of the assignment. Begin by sending a letter home to parents, explaining the lesson and the purpose for exploring the topic of censorship. Include a list of books that will be explored in class for those parents who wish to "guide" their child's selections.

Before sending the letter to parents, be sure your school administrator has been given a copy of the letter, along with a list of the curriculum objectives to be covered in the unit. If your schedules permit, allow for a meeting to present the letter to your administrator in person so that you can discuss any concerns before you begin.

2. Preview the censorship and propaganda resources suggested for use in the classroom. Although all sites are educationally appropriate, some may not be appropriate for all reading levels. Identify areas of concern and make sure that all links are active.

3. Create a list of censored or banned books that meet the needs and reading levels of your students. Suggestions can be found at The 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books of 1990–2000, Books That Have Been Challenged, and Banned Books Online. It is helpful to identify books on the list that require an advanced reading level. Ask your school and local librarians if they can place selected books from this list on hold for your class.

4. Gather a variety of magazine ads that illustrate propaganda techniques. Preview the Propaganda Critic website, which lists and defines the different forms of propaganda used in advertising. Nike, Volkswagen, and Gap have had some of the

most effective advertising campaigns of the past few years. By examining various advertisements, students will be able to explore the propaganda techniques that are most often employed.

It also may prove beneficial to gather and have students view controversial advertisements, such as for alcohol or cigarettes. Media Awareness Network: Points to Consider webpage discusses the issue of tobacco advertisements aimed at young people and provides students the opportunity to explore how advertisers use propaganda to persuade and sell their product to an audience.

5. Preview a copy of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

6. Print out two copies of the Analyzing Advertisements handout for each student and make a transparency of it for demonstration purposes.

7. Although this lesson plan is conducted over several weeks, some sessions will take longer than others and it is important to incorporate time for reading. Read through the lesson and adjust the timeframe according to the needs of your class and curriculum.

Instruction and Activities

Week 1

Session 1

1. Begin with a whole-class discussion of bias and stereotyping. Ask students to identify and define stereotypes and how they impact their decisions. Next, ask them to define bias and identify instances of bias that they may have encountered in their own lives.

2. After the class discussion, have students access Media Awareness Network: Media Stereotyping. While reading this webpage, ask students to make a list of the different stereotypes and include general information about their impact.

Session 2

1. Have students identify some of the most commonly stereotyped groups (e.g., women, minorities, young men) and select one group to research further.

2. Have students again access the Media Stereotyping webpage to read more about the particular group that they selected. Ask them to focus specifically on the areas of representation in the news and entertainment, body image, and gender roles. While students are researching, they should compile their findings about the stereotyped group in a chart.

3. End the session by asking students to discuss the overall concepts of stereotypes and how they impact different aspects of society.

Homework: Ask students to bring in magazine ads for the next class session.

Session 3

As preparation for this session, gather a variety of magazine ads for students to view in class. Students have also been assigned to bring in magazine ads.

1. Have students visit the following websites to review and take notes on the different types of propaganda techniques used in advertising:

- * Analyzing TV Ads
- * Media Awareness Network: Alternate Ads
- * Propaganda Critic

If you do not have access to a full computer lab, information about the propaganda techniques can be printed out and distributed to students.

2. Give students a copy of the Analyzing Advertisements handout. Together as a class, explore the types of propaganda techniques used in the magazine ads you have selected. Fill out the handout on the overhead as you identify the advertisement and the type of propaganda used.

3. End the session by asking students to identify the propaganda techniques used in the ads they brought to class and explain how they reached their decision.

Homework: Distribute another copy of the Analyzing Advertisements handout. Ask students to watch a few television commercials and complete the handout for homework. Also, read “Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television.”

Session 4

1. In small groups, have students discuss the findings from their homework and class work. Ask them to explore the following questions:

- * Which propaganda techniques were used in magazine ads?
- * Which propaganda techniques were used in television ads?
- * Which propaganda techniques were used most frequently?
- * Do the propaganda techniques used in television ads differ from those used in magazine ads?
- * How did television elements such as sound, motion, and repetition of images impact the student as a viewer?
- * How did these television elements contribute to or distract from the ad?
- * What type of stereotyping did students see in television ads?
- * Which medium, television or magazine, has the most impact on its target audience?
- * Why might an advertiser choose a specific magazine or television program in which to advertise?

2. Following the small-group discussion, ask students to share their findings with the class. Explore the similarities and differences between television and magazine ads.

3. End the discussion by asking students to determine what makes a magazine ad effective and what makes a television ad effective. As students share, record their responses on an overhead for all to see and reference. This overhead can be photocopied later and given to students to help them as they create their own ad campaign.

4. Have students explain why they might choose one medium over the other (television vs. magazine) to advertise and give the reasons for their choice.

Session 5

Hand out the list that you prepared of banned and challenged books. Ask students to identify three choices from the list provided. Have them number their choices in order of preference since they will want backup options if their first choice is unavailable. Bring students to the school library to select and check out one of the books from the list. Give them the weekend to visit a local library if certain books cannot be obtained in the school library.

Homework: Ask students to predict in their journal why the book that they selected may have been challenged or banned.

Weeks 2–3

1. Give students a copy of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. As a class, discuss the issue of free speech and the importance of this right. Ask students to recall any information they may have learned in social studies class regarding the first amendment. Make sure to include a discussion on the roles and responsibility of teachers and schools in this issue.

2. Have students access the following websites to find information about why certain books are challenged or banned:

- * Banned Books and Censorship: Information and Resources: <http://libraries.luc.edu/about/banned/index.htm>
- * Background for Banned Books Week

After researching online, have the class brainstorm and create a chart identifying the most common reasons for banning or challenging a book. Show PowerPoint on censorship and banned books.

3. Ask students to respond to the following questions:

- * What reasons might be given for the banning or challenging of a book?
- * Why might a particular group or person want to protect a child from some of the ideas in the challenged books?
- * Why might it be important for students to read books that explore controversial or sensitive topics?
- * How might controversial books be used to break down stereotypes and bias?

4. As students read the book that they selected, ask them to use their response journals to explore the ways in which the novel focuses on controversial issues. In their journal, ask them to examine the following areas:

- * Any positive or negative bias or stereotyping that appears in the novel
- * The sensitive topics that are explored
- * The reasons why this book might be considered offensive
- * The theme of the novel
- * Any lessons that are taught
- * The techniques the writer uses to express his or her opinion through the novel
- * The way in which the book might be useful in helping students understand differences between themselves and others
- * Their opinion on banning the book, and selections from the novel that helped them form this decision

5. When students have finished reading their book, have them visit the websites, Books That Have Been Challenged and Banned Books Online (<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books/banned-books.html>), to learn the reasons that the book they read may have been banned or challenged. Ask them to compare their prediction to the reason cited on these websites.

6. End this two-week period by having students write a one-paragraph response supporting their decision to ban or not to ban the book that they read. They should include three specific examples from the text, found during their reading research, to support this decision.

Weeks 4–5

Have students create an ad campaign to support their decision to ban or not to ban the book that they read. Students should use their understanding of propaganda techniques when creating their campaign.

- * Some items to include in the campaign would be a magazine ad, a radio ad, a poster, a bumper sticker, and a t-shirt design. Students can be creative in selecting the elements for their campaign.
- * If your school has access to video you might also encourage students to create a television ad or a public service announcement.
- * Students should incorporate at least one example of each of the propaganda techniques they explored in class. Have students brainstorm which techniques are best suited to each particular medium they are creating.
- * As a summary, have students explain, in writing, what message they intend to get across to the audience and what propaganda techniques they incorporated into their ad campaign and why.

Extensions

- * Have students write letters to the school committee addressing the banning of books in the school system.
- * Have students explore stereotypes and bias in health-related advertisement and services and the use of propaganda and media bias in anti-drug and anti-smoking campaigns.
- * Have students research landmark cases that influenced the issue of free speech. Then, follow up by holding a mock court case to debate whether a controversial book should be banned or not in an elementary classroom.

- * Have students debate the censorship of movies or television programs.
- * Have students create a top ten list of the most important books of their time and why the issues addressed in them are crucial to study.

Student Assessment/Reflections

- * Make observations and anecdotal notes based on class discussion.
- * 5 Journals on books students are reading (assign them as you are reading, usually one per week, as homework)
- * Final project
- * Evaluate student's written responses on the Analyzing Advertisements handout.
- * Evaluate the entries in each student's response journal relating to the book that they read during the lesson:
 - * Low performance: The student states one or two of the central issues raised in the novel very briefly, but does not provide reflection.
 - * At or below average: The student states one or two of the central issues raised in the novel briefly and reflects briefly on each.
 - * At or above average: The student explores the central issues raised in the novel thoughtfully and critically.
 - * Exemplary performance: The student explores numerous issues raised in the novel thoughtfully and critically.
- * Use the Rubric to assess each student's ad campaign.
- * Use rubric to assess final projects

This plan was taken and modified from Read, Write, Think at:

http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=203

Additionally, Chuck Atteberry and Sarah Fehey helped in the creation of this plan.

Additional sources that are helpful are:

http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=410

<http://www.ncte.org/positions/statements/righttoreadguideline>

<http://www.ala.org/>

List of the 100 most challenged books:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/issuesadvocacy/banned/frequentlychallenged/challengedbydecade/100mostfrequently.cfm>

Additional PDFs and other documents are included.

Most students read 4-6 books in a six-week period. Some read more. I give extra credit to those who read more and then complete a book review on each additional book.

The next pages are of documents you will need for this unit:

Banned Books Unit:
Independent Novel—4 Books Over the Next 6 Weeks

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your son/daughter/child will be learning about the list of attached books this week. Each of the books on this list has been banned, censored, or challenged for various reasons and by various institutions. We are teaching a banned books unit for your child because this is an excellent way to introduce and discuss the First Amendment in regards to reading, as well as to engage and succeed in reading comprehension. You must sign your name next to the books your child will read in this class. Your child must have four signatures in order to read. Please list any books you DO NOT want your son/daughter/child to read, or write any comments you wish on the space provided below. They should have information about the book written next to each title. If they do not have your signature, they will not be able to read the book. In addition, if there are books your child wants to read that are not on this list, and these books are of the appropriate reading level, you may write these titles in and your child will be allowed to read those books. Please sign on the line at the bottom of this page and return with your child by Friday, January 9, 2010.

Thank You,

Brooke Nelson

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Additional Banned Books You Would Like Your Child to Read: _____

Banned Books You Absolutely Do Not Want Your Child to Read: _____

BANNED BOOKS: FINAL PROJECT (Part 1)

TOTAL POINTS: 115

Objective: Make a children's book based off of the book you read that you liked best.

On one side of your book: 50pts

1. The exposition and conflict together: 10pts
2. Rising action: 10pts
3. Climax: 10pts
4. Falling action: 10pts
5. Resolution: 10pts

On the other side of your book, one picture to go along with each written page: 25pts

1. Must be in color! 10pts
2. Must cover the whole page: 10pts
3. Should be based off of what is written on the opposite side: 5pts

Grammar: 15pts

1. You have a total of 15 pts for grammar. For every mistake, one point will be taken off.

Cover: 15pts

1. Title: 3pts
2. Your name as author: 2pts
3. Must include: "A story based off of the novel written by..." 5pts
4. Must include a picture: 5pts

Back Page: 10pts

1. Autobiography: 5pts
2. Picture: 5pts



BANNED BOOKS: FINAL PROJECT (Part 2)

TOTAL POINTS: 100

1. Poster that includes information about your books
 - a. Title of each book
 - b. Author of each book
 - c. Reason the books was banned
 - d. Your rating of the book (creative symbols—from 1 to 5)
 - e. A visual that symbolizes the mood, theme, conflict, etc.
 - f. How has your opinion of censorship changed since we have done this Banned Books project? What will your opinion be in 10 years when you possibly have a family? Include an example of one “silly” and one “necessary” censorship issue (this should be a 3-5 paragraph essay, pasted on the back of the poster).

Rubric for Part 2:

Category	10 points	9-8 points	7-6 points	5-1 points	Total
CREATIVITY	Visually pleasing with plenty of color, solid visuals and legible lettering.	Somewhat pleasing with plenty of color, solid visuals, and legible lettering	Somewhat pleasing with some color, some visuals, and somewhat legible lettering	Not visually pleasing	
CONTENT	Contains all the required elements—student name, titles, authors, reasons, ratings, pages and visuals—opinion on the back	Contains 5 or more than the required elements— student name, titles, authors, reasons, ratings, pages and visuals—opinion on back	Contains 3 or more of the required elements-- student name, titles, authors, reasons, ratings, pages and visuals—opinion on back	Contains less than 3 of the required elements-- student name, titles, authors, reasons, ratings, pages and visuals—opinion on back	
PRESENTATION	Project is free of smudges and can be read from 6 feet away	Project may have a few smudges and can be read from 6 feet away	Project may have smudges and is hard to read	Project has many smudges or cannot be read from 6 feet away	
MECHANICS	No grammatical errors	2 errors	5 or fewer errors	More than 5 errors	
OPINION ESSAY	A solid essay that contains a thesis statement, had an attention getter, shows good support, has a conclusion, and is organized.	An essay with 4 elements	An essay with 3 elements	An essay with fewer than 3 elements	



Review of Jerry Mander's **Four Arguments For The Elimination Of Television**

by Ron Kaufman

"Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely . . . Winston kept his back turned to the telescreen."

-- from 1984 by George Orwell

Television is advertising. It is a medium whose purpose is to sell, to promote capitalism. In 1977, Jerry Mander, a former advertising executive in San Francisco, published **Four Arguments For The Elimination Of Television**. In the book, Mander reveals how the television networks and advertisers use this pervasive video medium for sales.

Four Arguments talks about a lot more than just advertising. Mander attacks not only the contents of the television images, but the effects television has on the human mind and body. His discussion includes: The induction of alpha waves, a hypnotizing effect that a motionless mind enters. How viewers often regard what they see on television as **real** even though the programs are filled with quick camera switches, rapid image movement, computer generated objects, computer generated morphing and other **technical events**. The placement of artificial images into our mind's eye. And the effects that large amounts of television viewing have on children and the onset of attention deficit disorder.

However, at the heart of Mander's arguments, lies advertising. In the words of writer Charles Bukowski: "[America is] **not a free country -- everything is bought and sold and owned.**"

Sales, by definition, is the process of convincing someone to purchase what they don't need. Advertising tries to convince someone that the solution to a problem or the fulfillment of a desire can only be achieved through the purchase of a product.

"If we take the word **need** to mean something basic to human survival -- food, shelter, clothing; or basic to human contentment -- peace, love, safety, companionship, intimacy, a sense of fulfillment; these will be sought and found by people whether or not there is advertising," Mander writes.

"People do need to eat, but the food which is advertised is processed food: processed meat, sodas, sugary cereals, candies. A food in its natural state, unprocessed, does not need to be advertised," he says. "Hungry people will find the food if it is available."

Television commercials and television shows both promote the purchase of commodities. Advertisers and television networks don't want viewers to go out and search for the answers on their own. They want to provide the answers on television. If your head hurts: buy Advil (or some other pain relieving drug). Is your stomach growling? Drive your Pontiac to Taco Bell or Burger King. Are your dishes dirty? Get some lemon-fresh Joy. Every guy wants a fast Acura and every girl wants to look like the women on the NBC television show **Friends**. Watch the Dallas Cowboys' Deion Sanders score a touchdown, watch the replay (Sponsored by Coors Light), then watch Deion do an advertisement for Pizza Hut.

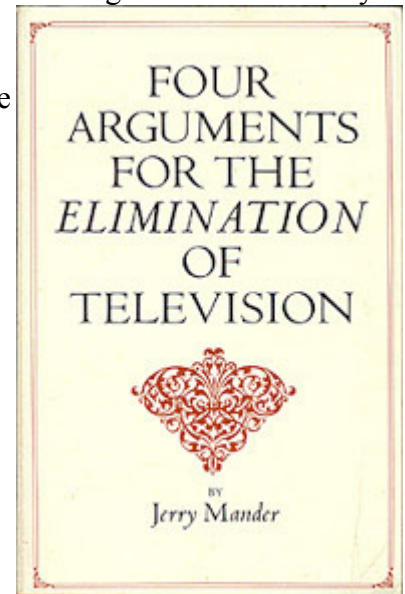
Television is promoting a lifestyle. It is a virtual reality that advertisers and networks seek to promote in order to gain additional revenue.

"Perhaps there is a need for cleanliness. But that is not what advertisers sell," Mander explains. "Cleanliness can be obtained with water and a little bit of natural fiber, or solidified natural fat. Major world civilizations kept clean that way for millennia. What is advertised is **whiteness**, a value beyond cleanliness; **sterility**, the avoidance of all germs; **sudsiness**, a cosmetic factor; and **brand**, a surrogate community loyalty."

While watching television, the viewer is not seeing the world as it is. He or she is looking at a world created by advertising. Television programs are put together with the conscious attitude of promoting a consumer society.

"If forty million people see a commercial for a car, then forty million people have a car commercial in their heads, all at the same time," Mander says. "This is bound to have more beneficial effect on the commodity system than if, at that moment, all those people were thinking separate thoughts which, in some cases, might not be about commodities at all."

But what makes television different from other forms of advertising, is that the viewer has **absolutely no control over the images**. Sure you can change the channel, but you're really only watching more of the same. The images come at you at the pace of the advertiser; the viewer just watches passively. While reading the newspaper, you don't have to look at the ads, you can turn the page. In that same newspaper, if you want to find a coupon for Ranch Style Black Beans, you will look and seek it out. You can read the first few lines of a billboard sign, then turn away.



However, when you watch television, the only way to escape the images is to turn the machine off. **The medium of television is controlled by the sender, not the viewer.** Images just flow, one after the next.

"If you decide to watch television, then there's no choice but to accept the stream of electronic images as it comes," Mander says. "Since there is no way to stop the images, one merely gives over to them. More than this, one has to clear all channels of reception to allow them in more cleanly. **Thinking only gets in the way.**"

The multitude of technical events and special effects that saturate the viewer throughout an average dose of television occur with such rapid frequency that any response is essentially eliminated. "Since television images move more quickly than a viewer can react, one has to chase after them with the mind," Mander says in the book.

"Every advertiser, for example, knows that before you can convince anyone of anything, you shatter their existing mental set and then restructure an awareness along lines which are useful to you. You do this with a few very simple techniques like fast-moving images, jumping among attention focuses, and switching moods," he explains.

Television watching is not active, it is passive. Both the viewer's mind and body do not react, and cannot react. Mander calls television imagery a form of sleep teaching.

One researcher interviewed by Mander explains: "The horror of television, is that the information goes in, but we don't react to it. It goes right into our memory pool and perhaps we react to it later but we don't know what we're reacting to. When you watch television you are training yourself not to react and so later on, you're doing things without knowing why you're doing them or where they came from."

Mander published *Four Arguments* almost twenty years ago. I believe his main theme then (and the one I hope you are getting from this essay), is that advertisers and networks don't want the viewers to think. They want them to just be good consumers and spend money on their products.

On May 10, 1995 at the National Cable Television Association convention in Dallas, John Malone, president of Tele-Communications Inc. (TCI), the nation's largest cable operator, was speaking about the future of television. "There's no question machines will be smarter than people," Malone said. "And **we won't have to think so hard.**"

Critics of television have often noted that what is shown on the networks, the programs, are of a low quality. The entire television industry has never seemed able to shake off the words Federal Communications Commission Chairman Newton Minow spoke in 1961, that television is "a vast wasteland."

It is the quality of the shows that are often criticized. However, this is missing the point. Television shows are not supposed to be thought provoking. You are not supposed to question the images you see on TV, only believe in their prima facie existence.

Television programs, commercials, news reports and talk shows are all designed toward blind acceptance by the viewer. Because, after all, if you see it with your own eyes, it must be true. It must be real. Flashing images on the video screen. Reality inside a box.

"Television offers neither rest nor stimulation," Mander says. "Television inhibits your ability to think, but it does not lead to freedom of mind, relaxation or renewal. It leads to a more exhausted mind. You may have time out from prior obsessive thought patterns, but that's as far as television goes.

"The mind is never empty, the mind is filled. What's worse, it is filled with someone else's obsessive thoughts and images."

Why do you think they call it programming?

Mander goes into great detail discussing the physical effects television viewing has on the human body. His analysis is excellent.

Banned Books Quiz

1. What recent law was passed that made it necessary for library staff members to turn over records about what you check out with a court order?
 - a. No Child Left Behind
 - b. Patriot Act
 - c. Information Retrieval Act
 - d. CIPA
2. Which of the following is NOT a general reason for challenging or banning a book-
 - a. social
 - b. moral
 - c. educational
 - d. religious
3. What was the Supreme Court case which established that school boards couldn't remove a book from its' library collection because they disagreed with it's content?
 - a. Schenck vs. United States (1919)
 - b. Ashcroft vs. Free Speech Coalition (2002)
 - c. Bush vs. Gore (2000)
 - d. Island Tree School District vs. Pico (1982)
4. True/False A 'banned' book has had a complaint made against it and those in authority over the library have chosen to remove the book.
5. Authors such as Mark Twain, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and William Shakespeare have written books which have been challenged or banned because of their treatment of minorities. Which of the reasons for banning or challenging a book does this fall under?
 - a. social
 - b. sexual
 - c. political
 - d. educational
6. The invention of the printing press in the 15th century made censorship more difficult because...
 - a. people could read better
 - b. books were printed faster than those who opposed the 'offensive' ones could destroy them.
 - c. censoring books just became unpopular around this time.
 - d. education became more important
7. Which amendment protects an author's right to print books which may possibly contain objectional material?
 - a. 2nd amendment
 - b. 14th amendment
 - c. 1st amendment
 - d. 5th amendment

8. Censorship is best defined as...

- a. not agreeing with the spoken or written words of another person or group.
- b. making a complaint against a book.
- c. the right of every individual to choose for themselves what they read or hear.
- d. limiting access to images or ideas because they offend or disturb someone or because someone disagrees with it.

9. Intellectual Freedom is best defined as...

- a. the right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction.
- b. being able to choose what college you want to go to or if you want to go college at all.
- c. being able to write or speak words that may encourage rebelling against our government or which may cause others harm.
- d. burning books you don't like.

10. True/False One reason you might be opposed to censorship is that it limits your choice of Information on a topic or from reading fictional depictions of difficult real-life topics.



Journal #1

Total Journal Points: 35

Total Presentation Points: 30

Answer the following questions. Write the date this was assigned, not the date you write it.

JOURNAL:

1. What is the title of your book?
2. Where are you in your reading? (Page number out of total page numbers.)
3. What is the best/worst part of your reading so far?
4. Is this a good book choice for you? Why?
5. How are you enjoying this author?
6. What do you think about this author's writing?
7. Identify the following: setting, plot, characters, conflicts
8. How would I describe the main characters? Physically? Personality? Emotionally? Must answer all three.
9. Would you recommend this book to other students? Why or why not?
10. A one-page summary about your book.

PRESENTATION:

On Friday, you will talk about questions #1, 2, 7, and 9. You will also read two sections (of your choice) from your book. These two sections should be at least seven sentences long and should be taken from the part of the book that you have enjoyed the most so far. You will have to include why you picked each.

You will need to turn in your two chosen sections (with your reason why you chose them) and your answers for the specific questions on a separate sheet of paper on Friday.



Journal #2

Total Journal Points: 25

Total Presentation Points: 30

Answer the following questions. Write the date this was assigned, not the date you write it.

JOURNAL:

1. Talk about your second book title. What does it mean?
2. What is the theme? What is the author trying to teach the reader?
3. Draw or cut out pictures of how you see your main character. Size: one page.
4. What is on the cover? Do you think it is a good cover considering the subject of the book?
5. Design a new cover by either drawing one or using pictures. Size: one page.
6. Name one thing you like about the book. Why?
7. Name one thing you dislike about the book. Why?

PRESENTATION:

You will have to show the class your final outcomes for numbers three and five. Along with the pictures, you will have to give 5 reasons why you did what you did for your new book cover and 10 reasons why you chose what you chose for your character. You will have to include two quotes said by your main character and the reason why you chose them. Include page # and paragraph #.

Your quotes and number (pages and paragraph) should be turned in on a sheet of paper on Friday. Please include your book title and author.



Journal #3

Total Journal Points: 20

Total Presentation Points: 40

You should be on your second or third book by now.

Answer the following questions. Write the date this was assigned, not the date you write it.

JOURNAL:

1. Why did you choose the first two books you did? Be specific. $\frac{1}{2}$ page for each.
2. What is the best part of your second book?
3. What is the worst part?
4. What is the setting? Be visually detailed.
5. What is the main conflict and are there any complications?
6. What book have you heard about that sounds like something you might want to read? $\frac{1}{2}$ page in length.
7. Same as above, but what book do you NOT want to read? $\frac{1}{2}$ page in length.

PRESENTATION:

Give a review using stars or thumbs (whatever—be creative) about your third book. Make sure you give your scale and make sure you give at least three sentences explaining why for each:

- Description
- Creativity
- Action
- Development of characters
- Ending
- Story line



Journal #4

Total Journal Points: 25

Total Presentation Points: NONE!

You should be on your third or fourth book.

Answer the following questions. Write the date this was assigned, not the date you write it.

JOURNAL:

1. Why is your book banned?
2. Do you agree with that reason?
3. Name two other things that are around today with the same reason why your book was banned. Should they be banned?
4. Find five words that you do not understand and define them. You should write down ALL definitions that are given to you in the dictionary. You will then highlight the correct definition according to how the word is used in your book.
5. Give a one-page summary of what you have read so far in your 3rd book.

PRESENTATION:

None! Yay!



Journal #5

Total Journal Points: 20

Total Presentation Points: None!

You should be on your 4th book, midway through.

Answer the following questions. Write the date this was assigned, not the date you write it.

1. Write a new ending for your third or fourth book.
 - a. Start from the climax.
 - b. Be creative.
 - c. Should be at least one page in length
 - d. All characters should be used
 - e. Should be realistic.